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0. LEGAL BASIS

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 concerning Community statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) in its Article 16 states the following:

1. Member States shall produce by the end of the year N+1 an intermediate quality report relating to the common cross-sectional EU indicators based on the cross-sectional component of year N.

Member States shall produce by the end of year N+2 final quality reports that cover both cross-sectional and longitudinal components in relation to the year of the survey N, focusing on the internal accuracy. [...]

2. The Commission (Eurostat) shall produce by the end of June N+2 a comparative intermediate quality report relating to the common cross-sectional EU indicators of year N.

The Commission (Eurostat) shall produce by 30 June N+3 a comparative final quality report that covers both cross-sectional and longitudinal components in relation to the year of the survey N. [...]

This document analyses the national quality reports prepared by all EU Member States except Belgium and The Netherlands¹, as well as Iceland and Norway. Switzerland is not included in this report by lack of information available at Eurostat².

The objective here is to evaluate the quality of the instrument from the European point of view, i.e. by establishing between-country comparisons of some of its key quality dimensions.

The quality aspects described in this document are those specified in the Commission Regulation N° 28/2004 (Annex IV) as regards the detailed content of final quality reports to be produced by Eurostat.

1. RELEVANCE

The relevance of an instrument has to be assessed in the light of the needs of its users. As for EU-SILC the main users are:

- Institutional users like DG EMPL of the Commission and the Social Protection Committee, in charge of the monitoring of social protection and social inclusion, or other Commission services;
- Statistical users in Eurostat or in Member States National Statistical Institutes to feed sectoral or transversal publications such as the Annual Progress Report on the Lisbon Strategy (structural indicators), the Sustainable Development Strategy monitoring report, the Eurostat yearbook and other reports;

¹ This report includes information on Belgium and The Netherlands even if no quality report has been delivered by these countries to Eurostat by 15 April 2010.

² When this report is written Eurostat has not received the final quality report from Switzerland for the 2007 operation.

- Researchers having access to microdata; and
- End users – including the media - interested in living conditions and social cohesion in the EU.

With the 2007 operation covering so far the then 27 Member States plus Norway and Iceland, EU-SILC has proved to be the main source for comparable indicators for monitoring and reporting on living conditions and social cohesion at the EU level.

The relevance of the instrument is very high among all users as it was shown during the 2010 International Conference on Comparative EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions held in Warsaw (25-26 March 2010). During this conference some suggestions for improvement were expressed; some of the concerns are summarized below:

- More timely results - it would be essential to shorten the time between data collection and data dissemination;
- Better consistency between micro (SILC) and macro-data (national accounts) as well as micro-data from national sources;
- Broader access to SILC micro-data from all countries;
- Improvement of UDB documentation and better communication about data revisions;
- Stable results without too many breaks in series.

These elements, among others, are taken into account to the maximum extent in the process of improvement of the instrument which will continue in the next years.

In order to assess how the users perceive the SILC process, an evaluation of this instrument (a so-called ‘rolling review’) has been launched in 2010. This rolling review consists of thorough assessment of users’ and partners’ satisfaction, use of resources for Eurostat and for Member States, response burden, etc. The report from this exercise will be available by the end of 2010.

2. ACCURACY

The concept of accuracy refers to the reliability of estimates computed from a sample rather than the entire population. This section dwells on methodological features of the EU-SILC samples surveyed in each country and intends to draw a picture of their relevance for estimation purposes.

2.1. Sample design

In 2007, the EU-SILC instrument covered 29 countries³: one carried out the survey for the first time (RO), one for the second time (BG), while twelve did it for the third time (CZ, DE, CY, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, SI, SK, UK) and sixteen have carried out the survey for four or more years (BE, DK, EE, IE, EL, ES, FR, IT, AT, PT, FI, SE, IS, NO).

³ As noted before, this report summarizes the information included in the national quality reports, i.e. 29 countries even if two other launched EU-SILC in 2007.

The Framework Regulation calls for the selection of nationally representative probabilistic samples, with the exception of Germany where quota samples can be used until 2008⁴.

The observation units are both households and individuals. Households are clusters of individuals and all the members of a selected household are eligible for inclusion in the sample. The following table summarizes the sampling design by country.

Table 1: Sampling design (2007)

Sampling of dwellings/ addresses	Simple random sampling	Malta, Austria*
	Stratified simple random sampling	Luxembourg
	Stratified multi-stage sampling	Czech Republic, Spain, France, Hungary, Latvia, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, United Kingdom
	Quota (1/4) + sampling taken from former Microcensus (3/4)	Germany
Sampling of households	Stratified simple random sampling	Cyprus, Slovakia
	Stratified multi-stage sampling	Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Italy
Sampling of individuals	Simple random or systematic sampling	Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Norway
	Stratified simple random or systematic sampling	Estonia, Lithuania
	Stratified two-phase sampling	Finland
	Stratified two-stage sampling	Slovenia

Source: National Quality Reports 2007.

* Austria: "In the first wave of 2007 we used a stratified simple random sampling."

EU-SILC data is collected by an interview with the exception of seven countries where most or part of the information is administrative, gathered from national registers. These so-called 'register countries' are Denmark, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway.

Most of the countries have adopted the 4-year rotational design recommended by Eurostat⁵. Norway and France have longer panel duration (8 and 9 years respectively) and Luxembourg has a pure panel supplemented with a new sample each year.

2.2. Sampling errors

This section was largely developed in the 2007 Comparative EU Intermediate Quality Report (see annex 3 of that report). In addition, annex 2 of the 2006 Comparative EU Final Quality report presents information on the concept of sampling errors, the technical methodology for their estimation and the obtained results for a subset of countries.

⁴ In Germany for 2007, 75% of the data is based on probability sampling and 25% on quota samples.

⁵ Rotational design refers to the sample selection based on a number of subsamples or replications, each of them similar in size and design and representative of the whole population. From one year to the next, some replications are retained, while others are dropped and replaced by new replications.

2.3. Non-sampling errors

Commission Regulation (EC) No 28/2004, specifies the information on non-sampling errors which should be presented in national quality reports: sampling frame and coverage errors, measurement and processing error and non-response errors. All these sections were largely discussed in the Intermediate EU Quality Report 2007. This section focuses on the unit non-response for the EU-SILC longitudinal component.

2.3.1. Non-response errors

The term non-response encompasses a wide variety of reasons for non-observation. Non-response means failure to obtain a measurement on one or more study variables for one or more sample units. Non-response errors occur when the survey fails to get a response to some or all of the questions. Non-response causes both an increase in variance, due to the decrease in the effective sample size and/or due to the use of imputation and, more importantly, causes bias as the non-respondents and respondents generally differ with respect to the characteristic of interest.

Non-response is a potential source of bias particularly if the missing data mechanism is not what has been termed as 'missing at random'. For instance, one might expect persons with high incomes to be more reluctant to give income information in an interview, thus rendering the upper income class under-represented in the sample and the estimates downwardly biased.

In particular, this section focuses on the analysis of the achieved sample size.

The following tables present the achieved sample size for the longitudinal sample. For the household one (table 2), the household identification numbers are taken from the D-file (register file) with the corresponding year of interview. Starting with 2004 the different number of years is counted. The interviewed acceptance is also checked (DB135 should be equal to 1). When this number of years is equal to four, the household is added in the number of households which have been in the sample for four years. Similarly for 2005 the number of households that have been three years in the sample is counted; and idem for 2006.

The achieved sample size in terms of individuals is presented in table 3 and is based on the R-file. The different number of years when an individual is present in the file is counted, similarly as it has been done for the households for constructing table 2. Here the completeness of the information is checked through the variable RB250. Results are given for the total population as well as for the population of 16+. Breakdown according to sample persons and co-residents are also presented in the table.

Table 2: Achieved household sample size (longitudinal 2007)

	06-07	05-06-07	04-05-06-07
BE	3872	2168	733
CZ	6911	3568	.
DK	3163	1970	921
DE	9938	6306	.
EE	3548	2022	1498
IE	2971	1519	503
EL	3914	2338	1146
ES	8051	4845	2213
FR	8297	6423	4888
IT	14401	8888	4202
CY	2533	1622	.
LV	2872	1697	.
LT	3329	1772	.
LU	3245	2742	2364
HU	5495	3200	.
MT	2227	1310	.
NL	6488	4612	.
AT	4543	2711	1236
PL	10205	6546	.
PT	2889	1844	915
SI	5601	3443	.
SK	3345	2086	.
FI	4910	3217	1578
SE	4091	2682	1304
UK	5990	3648	.
IS	1677	1067	501
NO	3102	2857	2767

Source: Micro-database (June 2010)

Table 3: Achieved individual sample size (longitudinal 2007)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BE	9389	7380	7408	1981	5215	4073	4177	1038	1788	1374	1428	360
CZ	16279	13552	13799	2480	8341	6942	7159	1182	.	.	.	.
DK	7893	6059	3163	4730	4844	3671	1970	2874	2219	1676	921	1298
DE	22116	18236	18551	3565	14161	11395	11843	2318	.	.	.	.
EE	9787	8058	8143	1644	5495	4490	4589	906	4014	3170	3391	623
IE	7031	5514	5603	1428	3498	2717	2776	722	1167	866	891	276
EL	10168	8404	8410	1758	5963	4890	4960	1003	2871	2341	2405	466
ES	22052	18142	18101	3949	13108	10688	10878	2229	5609	4394	4567	1041
FR	20268	15725	19869	399	12030	9328	11878	152	11729	9015	11729	.
IT	36118	30393	30581	5537	22354	18725	19020	3334	10466	8761	8982	1484

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CY	7674	6040	6103	1571	4934	3822	3974	960	.	.	.	.
LV	6979	5789	5885	1094	3996	3292	3450	546	.	.	.	.
LT	8420	7095	7247	1173	4593	3736	3899	694	.	.	.	.
LU	8553	6512	8332	221	7079	5494	6944	135	6027	4728	5968	59
HU	13964	11581	11661	2303	8099	6621	6839	1260	.	.	.	.
MT	6520	5242	5369	1151	3753	2993	3114	639	.	.	.	.
NL	16502	12295	6488	10014	11841	8636	4612	7229	.	.	.	.
AT	11134	8934	8974	2160	6699	5309	5403	1296	3118	2440	2525	593
PL	28754	22901	23358	5396	17983	14160	14752	3231	.	.	.	.
PT	7835	6624	6660	1175	4985	4160	4239	746	2452	2034	2096	356
SI	17992	15505	5601	12391	10987	9387	3443	7544	.	.	.	.
SK	9750	8263	8385	1365	6051	5060	5237	814	.	.	.	.
FI	11982	9407	4910	7072	7649	5931	3217	4432	3651	2827	1578	2073
SE	9873	7628	4091	5782	6235	4762	2682	3553	2958	2240	1304	1654
UK	13856	10927	10918	2938	8325	6518	6671	1654	.	.	.	.
IS	4700	3520	1677	3023	2859	2092	1067	1792	1305	952	501	804
NO	7647	5838	3102	4545	6799	5139	2857	3942	6378	4807	2767	3611

Source: Micro-database (June 2010)

- 1 All present 2006-2007
- 2 16 and older present 2006-2007
- 3 Sample person present 2006-2007
- 4 Co-resident present 2006-2007
- 5 All present 2005-2006-2007
- 6 16 and older present 2005-2006-2007
- 7 Sample person present 2005-2006-2007
- 8 Co-resident present 2005-2006-2007
- 9 All present 2004-2005-2006-2007
- 10 16 and older present 2004-2005-2006-2007
- 11 Sample person present 2004-2005-2006-2007
- 12 Co-resident present 2004-2005-2006-2007

2.4. Mode of data collection

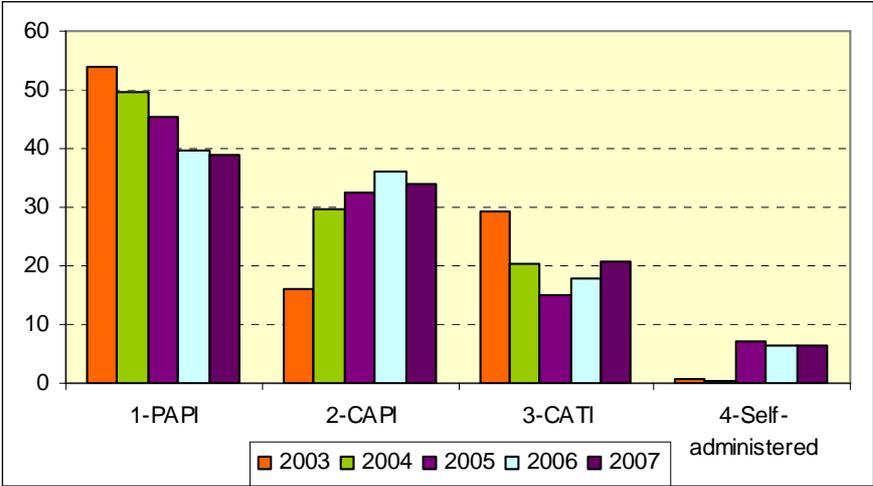
The EU-SILC Regulation allows some degree of flexibility to countries regarding the mode of data collection. The information can be either extracted from registers or collected from interviews. For the interview, four different ways to collect the data are possible:

- Paper-Assisted Personal Interview (PAPI)
- Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI)
- Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)
- Self-administered questionnaire

Countries may use only one method or a combination of various methods. In the EU-SILC legal basis, priority is given to face-to-face personal interviews (PAPI or CAPI) over the other modes

of data collection. The following graph represents the different modes of data collection used by the countries for the longitudinal component in 2005, 2006 and 2007 operations⁶.

Figure 1: Mode of data collection (EU27⁷ plus IS, NO; %; longitudinal)



Source: Micro-database (April 2010)

The use of PAPI is declining over the years; on the other hand, the use of CAPI as well as self-administered has increased over the years. Face-to-face interviews had been always the most used (either in paper or with a computer).

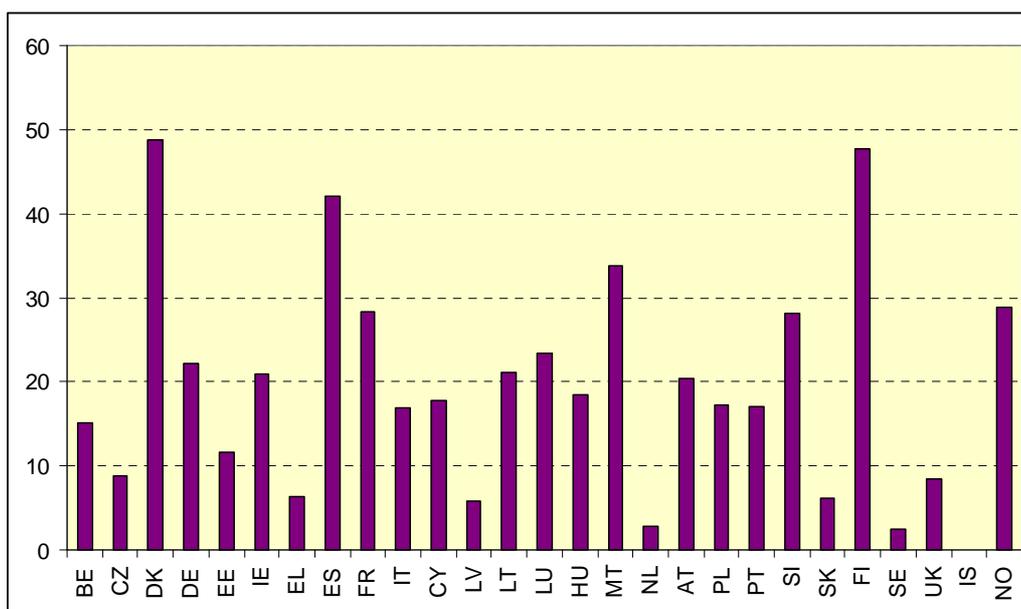
Proxy interviewing is permitted if the proxy rate is kept as limited as possible. Some countries that encountered rather high non-response rates chose to use proxies to ensure a certain degree of accuracy in their data. In addition, in countries that use the selected respondent type of survey, the household respondent (in most cases selected respondent) is asked for information about all household members, therefore, these countries have a high percentage of proxy interviews concerning personal interviews. The following graph presents the percentage of proxies in 2007 for the longitudinal component⁸.

⁶ Figures are obtained adding up the number of interviews carried out by each mode of data collection by all countries and dividing it by the total of interviews carried out in all countries. Detailed percentages for each mode of data collection by country for the 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 longitudinal component can be found in the annex.

⁷ Countries are included for the years there is data for the longitudinal operation.

⁸ Detailed percentages and number of proxy interviews by country for the 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 longitudinal component can be found in the annex.

Figure 2: Percentage of proxy interviews by country (longitudinal 2007)



Source: Micro-database (April 2010)

As we can see in the graph above, the percentage of proxy interviews varies greatly among countries. In addition, for some countries there are also large changes from one year to another (see data in the annex). In the register countries the percentage of proxies diverges from below 3% in Sweden and The Netherlands, to around 48% in Denmark and Finland.

The information reported by countries on the reason for the high percentage of proxies is the following:

Denmark	“...The interviewers are told to accept partners not married as proxies for the interview, if necessary, but that they should be very careful in doing so. Other members of the household should only be accepted as proxies in the worst case, e.g. if no other possibility is feasible. Questions under d shall preferably be asked the selected person. If it is not feasible, because the person is not home or is busy with other things, the instruction is that a proxy interview with one of the parents is OK. It is our experience that this procedure is the most feasible. It makes the interview more fluent and comfortable. Interviewing each household member individually instead of one household member on behalf of the others would be a troublesome process to the interviewers as well as to the interviewees. It must be taken into account, that information on income and many other subjects is information extracted from registers, and therefore was not included in the questionnaire.”
Greece	“Proxy interviews are very under reported.”
Spain	“One of the major concerns is the individual non-response after the bad results in 2004 survey (15.63 %). Since the 2005 survey an effort in fieldwork has been made to reduce this individual non-response. Once the individual non-response has been reduced, there is from 2005 a high rate of proxy interviews that we are trying to reduce.”
Cyprus	“Proxy interviews occurred mainly for persons serving as national guards or for students fully supported by their parents and temporarily away; both of these categories were considered to be members of their parents’ households. The following tables present the distribution of individuals aged 16 or over by data status

	and type of interview.”
Lithuania	"Some data collected by proxy interview were amended by telephone, but method of data collection was not changed in the microdata."
Malta	<p>“Respondents’ cooperation in Malta’s EU-SILC is reasonably good. However the effect of respondents’ burden is strongly felt, particularly since Malta is a small country and persons constantly find themselves being selected for participation in surveys. The EU-SILC rotational design, that requires that households are re-interviewed for up to 4 consecutive years, also contributes to the burden on respondents. Unfortunately, this might mean that in some panels the level of attrition is quite large.</p> <p>All this also explains why Malta has a relatively high rate of proxy interviews in terms of individuals answering on behalf of other household members who are not at home at the time of interview. Given a choice between no answers and proxy answers, we feel that the latter is the lesser evil. Nevertheless we do make it a point to emphasize to interviewers to keep proxy interviews to a minimum, and where possible to re-contact households by telephone to collect the information from persons who were not present at time of interview. Furthermore, prior to interview, all household members who cannot be present during the interview are asked to leave appropriate documentation related to their income (e.g. payslips, tax returns, etc.) with the person who will be responding on their behalf.”</p>
Austria	<p>“Despite the efforts to keep the rate of proxy interviews low, this rate increased between 2004 and 2005 from 12.5% to 25.8%. The presented table refers only to those persons interviewed in all four waves. Since proxy interviews are a possible source of bias, Statistics Austria and the fieldwork institute aimed at keeping the rate of proxy interviews low. Having learned from the experiences from the survey of 2005, the fieldwork institute managed to reduce the ratio of proxy interviews from 25.8% in 2005 to 19.6% in the rotational group four in 2006. In 2007 the rate of proxy interviews remained at about the same level (19.0%). As in the last years, the ratio of proxy interviews varies considerably with the basic activity status of the respondent for whom a proxy interview had to be conducted. Retired and unemployed persons are more likely to give a personal interview (and/or are more accessible for interviews), than people in employment or self-employment.”</p>
Poland	<p>“The interviewers decided on proxy interviews only if the substitute respondents were well informed about the situation in the household and there was no other possibility to get the information. Proxy interviews were performed in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no contact with the respondent because of long-term absence (e.g. work in another town or abroad); - respondent’s disability, illness or pathology (such as alcoholism); - according to other members of the household, the respondent was only available late at night and was not willing to participate in such a long interview, while at the same time the proxy could provide detailed information, even based on the documents, such as tax statements.”
Romania	<p>“The high number of the proxy interview was due to the fact that data collection period was in the holiday period. In the future waves a special emphasis will be given to this aspect in the training sessions and the phenomenon will be supervised more severe.”</p>
Finland	<p>“The use of proxy respondents is a problematic choice. In the EU-SILC, it is important to interview persons about their subjective evaluations (especially about health). Person-specific facts are also collected in the IDS, but these facts are of objective nature and can easily be reported by a household representative. Problems</p>

	<p>arising from the use of proxy respondents concentrate on the subjective questions: the control in terms of which household member answers the questions involving subjective assessments, depends on the interviewer. Use of proxy is denied only in the self-reported health questions (PH010-PH030). On the other hand, the selected respondent may be utterly unaware of the household economy and other members' activities. This is the case especially with the youngest respondents. In Finland, the EU-SILC is designed on the selected respondent -model. Typically, only one person is interviewed. He/she gives all the information: household questionnaire and the personal questionnaires of the selected person and the other members of the household. The proxy respondent is chosen by the interviewer. The interviewers have been instructed to negotiate with the selected respondent and prefer interviewing him if he is able to give information about the household economy, housing and the other household members' activity. Otherwise, a proxy respondent is interviewed. According to an estimate of the interviewers, about 85 per cent of their informants are those who have the best knowledge of the household's affairs. In case the selected person is aged less than 18 years, the contact letter is also sent to his/her parents or guardians. Around 90 per cent of selected persons under the age of 18 have been represented by a proxy....”</p>
<p>United Kingdom</p>	<p>“In strictly controlled circumstances, interviewers are allowed to conduct a proxy interview with a close household member to reduce unit non-response errors. Proxy interviews are only used where it has proved impossible, despite repeated calls, to contact a particular member of a household in person. In these cases, some questions are omitted, for example those which are more subjective such as those relating to health. Further effort is directed towards reducing item non-response by converting these proxy interviews to full interviews. Attempts are made to contact the household member, who was unavailable during the initial face-to-face interview, and ask them the questions that were omitted from the proxy interview. It was established through extensive research that the most efficient way of re-contacting these respondents was by employing Telephone Unit (TIU) interviewers who could contact a widely dispersed population more efficiently than would be possible by conducting face-to-face interviews. ...proxy respondents are not asked any income questions, apart from one question relating to ‘total personal disposable income’ (this has also been rectified, since November 2007 proxy respondents have been asked to provide full-income information). As a consequence of this, for the survey years 2005, 2006 & 2007 there are a relatively large number of individuals for whom income information has been wholly imputed.”</p>

Source: National Quality Reports 2007.

2.5. Imputation procedure

According with EU-SILC Framework Regulation, “Member States shall transmit to the Commission (Eurostat) in the form of micro-data files weighted cross-sectional and longitudinal data which has been checked, edited and imputed in relation to the income”.

Countries should implement imputation procedure for their income variables but flexibility is given to them in order to let them choose the one which is the most appropriate in their case. Next table indicates the types of imputation techniques used by countries, as reported in the national quality reports.

Table 4: Imputation techniques used

	Mean/median imputation	Regression model	Hot deck	Cold deck	Other methods
Belgium	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Bulgaria	N	Y	N	N	Y
Czech Republic	N	N	Y	N	N
Denmark	not reported/not done				
Germany	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Estonia	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Ireland	not reported/not done				
Greece	not reported/not done				
Spain	N	Y	N	N	N
France	N	Y	N	N	N
Italy	N	N	Y	N	N
Cyprus	N	N	N	Y	Y
Latvia	N	N	Y	N	N
Lithuania	Y	N	N	N	Y
Luxembourg	N	Y	Y	Y	N
Hungary	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Malta	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
The Netherlands	N	N	N	N	Y
Austria	Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y
Poland	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Portugal	N	Y	N	N	N
Romania	not reported/not done				
Slovenia	N	N	Y	N	Y
Slovakia	N	Y	N	N	N
Finland	N	N	Y	N	Y
Sweden	not reported/not done				
United Kingdom	N	N	Y	N	Y
Iceland	N	Y	N	N	Y
Norway	N	N	N	N	Y

Source: National Quality Reports 2007.

* Austria: "Cold-deck imputation procedure was only used for the imputed rent (regression equivalent method)."

2.6. Imputed rent

The imputed rent (HY030) refers to the value that shall be imputed for all households that do not report paying full rent, either because they are owner-occupiers or they live in accommodation rented at a lower price than the market price or because the accommodation is provided rent free. This variable is mandatory from 2007 onwards.

According to Eurostat recommendations, the method to calculate the imputed rent should be Regression/Stratification method or User cost method. The following table summarizes the information received from countries through a questionnaire sent to them on 28/11/2008 on the

method used. If the method used by the country is one of the described above it is marked as 'F' in the table, otherwise is marked as 'P'. A special case is Finland (marked as 'L' in the table), because Finland's figure covers owner-occupied dwellings only. Dwellings rented at a lower price than a market price from a public, municipal, voluntary or non-profit agency have not been included in the calculations.

Table 5: Method to calculate imputed rent (2007)

Belgium	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Denmark	Germany	Estonia
P	F	P	P	F	F
Ireland	Greece	Spain	France	Italy	Cyprus
P	F	F	P	P	P
Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Hungary	Malta	The Netherlands
F	F	P	F	F	F
Austria	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Slovenia	Slovakia
F	F	F	F	F	F
Finland	Sweden	United Kingdom	Iceland	Norway	
F	P	P	F	F	

Source: Information gathered through a questionnaire sent by countries on 28/11/2008.

2.7. Company cars

From 2007 on: PY020 refers to "Other non-cash employee income" and PY021 to "Income from private use of company car".

For PY021 all countries recorded this variable following the definition, except for two countries: France (included in PY010) and Norway (corrected from 2008 onwards⁹).

The table below summarizes the information on the recording of PY020. The five mandatory components (shown in the table) are the following:

- (1) Company car and associated cost (free fuel, car insurance, taxes and duties) provided for either private use or both private and work use.
- (2) Free or subsidised meals, luncheon vouchers.
- (3) Reimbursement or payment of housing-related expenses (e.g. gas, electricity, water, telephone or mobile phone bills).
- (4) Free housing or discount of rent.

⁹ Comment from Norway: "Due to the organising of the income register, not able to split company car from other non cash employee income in the 2007 files, so all is included in PY020. However, we will try to see if the register can be adapted in such a way that this is possible for the 2008 operation. Using the old definition to compute the income aggregates should not be a problem for us."

- (5) Other goods and services provided free or at a reduced price by the employer to their employees, when they are a significant component of the income at national level.

Table 6: Non cash employee income – main components by country (2007)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Belgium	X	X	X	X	X
Bulgaria	X	X	X		X
Czech Republic	X	X	X		X
Denmark	X	X	X	X	X
Germany	X	X	X		X
Estonia	X	X	X	X	X
Ireland	X	X	X		X
Greece	X	X	X	From 2009	X
Spain	X	X	X	X	X
France	(See note)	X	X	X	X
Italy	X	X	X	X	X
Cyprus	X	X	X	X	X
Latvia	X	X	X		X
Lithuania	X	X	X	X	X
Luxembourg	X	X	X		X
Hungary	X	X	X		X
Malta	X	X	X		X
The Netherlands	X	Not collected (see note below)			
Austria		X	X	X	X
Poland	X	X	X	X	X
Portugal	X				
Romania	X	X	X	X	
Slovenia	X		X	X	X
Slovakia	X	X	X		X
Finland	Tax value				
Sweden	X	X	X	X	
United Kingdom	X				
Iceland	X	X	X		X
Norway	X		X	X	

Source: National quality reports (2007).

Some countries deviate from the standard guidelines:

- France: PY010 includes company car but not the other non-cash income components.
- The Netherlands: With its fiscal system it is not possible to separate non cash employee income from cash income (except the company car). Variable PY010G includes wages and salaries, payments, gratuities, tips but also income in kind like free housing paid for by the employer. This income in kind is taxable. Employers are allowed to pay untaxed payments within certain limits. These payments can not be considered as an income advantage.

3. TIMELINESS AND PUNCTUALITY

Cross-sectional data

Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 states that: "...The extreme deadline for the transmission of micro-data to Eurostat shall be 30 November (N+1) for Member States where data are collected at the end of year N or through a continuous survey or through registers and 1 October (N+1) for other Member States". Nevertheless, the grant agreements between Eurostat and Member States might have a different deadline.

All the information by country on the deadline established by the Regulation and the deadline by the contract can be found in the annex. The table in the annex also includes information on the date of the first transmission of data, the number of transmissions and the date of the last transmission. The main conclusions from this table are the following:

The first cross-sectional microdata for the 2007 operation were received in Eurostat on March 2008. Reception of microdata extended up to March 2010. Key indicators were released on Eurostat website by 15 December 2008 with four exceptions: indicators for Italy, Romania and the United Kingdom were released on 13 January 2009; those for Bulgaria on 22 July 2009.

Regulation deadlines were respected for the majority of the countries, at least for the first transmission of data, with the exception of eight countries: Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Cyprus, Austria, Portugal, Finland and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, for the reception of the final version of the data only six countries delivered the data before the specified deadline: Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Iceland and Norway.

Longitudinal data

For the longitudinal component, the Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 states the following: "...The mandatory deadline for the transmission of micro-data to Eurostat shall be the end of March (N+2), each year starting from the second year of EU-SILC". Contracts with Member States had different deadlines but all of them were earlier to the one in the Regulation.

Again there is a table in the annex with information by country on the deadline established by the Regulation, the deadline by the contract, the date of the first transmission of data, the number of transmissions and the date of the last transmission. The main conclusions from this table are the following:

The first longitudinal microdata for the 2007 operation were received by Eurostat on July 2008. Reception of the first version of the microdata extended up to October 2009.

The deadline stated in the Regulation was respected, for the first transmission of the data, by the great majority of the countries; there were only five exceptions: Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Iceland. Nevertheless, the reception of different versions of the data extended for several months for most of the countries, with four transmissions per country on average.

Quality reports

The deadline established in the Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 for the transmission of the national final quality reports is end of year N+2 and almost all countries met the deadline.

For the first transmission of the quality reports there are two groups of countries that did not meet the deadline:

- Six countries that delivered the quality reports after the deadline: the Czech Republic (14 days), Greece (one month), France (one month and a half), Italy (15 days), Romania (one month) and the United Kingdom (two months).
- Two countries that have not sent the quality report yet (by 15 April): Belgium and The Netherlands.

In addition, a few countries had to send the reports more than once to improve different sections on it.

Indicators

Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 states that: “Together with the micro-data files, Member States shall transmit social cohesion indicators based on the cross-sectional sample of year N which will be included in the annual spring report of year (N+2) to the European Council.”

The set of social cohesion indicators were finally uploaded on Eurostat website by 15 December 2008, which allowed for their inclusion into the Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion as well as the February revision of the statistical annex of the annual report on Lisbon Strategy to be released for the spring meeting of the European Council.

4. ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY

In accordance with Commission Regulation 831/2002, the Commission has released SILC anonymized micro-data via CD-ROM to researchers. The UDB (User database) with the cross-sectional 2007 micro-data was sent to countries and contractors¹⁰ in March 2009, longitudinal 2007 micro-data in November 2009 and cross-sectional 2008 micro-data in March 2010.

Data aggregated tables in the form of predefined tables or of multidimensional tables are available free of charge on Eurostat website and can be explored via the data navigation tree. Public information on data coding as well as methodological description of EU-SILC is available at <http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/dsis/eusilc/home>. Moreover, there is a dedicated section on the website of Eurostat containing key information on Living condition and social protection statistics including information on EU-SILC.

In addition, 2007 data was used in the following publications:

- Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2009;
- The Social Situation in the European Union 2009;
- Sustainable development in the European Union. 2009 monitoring report of the EU sustainable development strategy;
- Youth in Europe. A statistical portrait;
- Statistics in Focus (Population and social conditions): 79 million EU citizens were at-risk-of-poverty in 2007, No 46/2009;

¹⁰ The term "contractors" includes universities, research institutes and some other bodies.

- Europe in figures. Eurostat Yearbook 2010;
- Key figures on Europe. Pocketbook 2010;
- Combating poverty and social exclusion. A statistical portrait of the European Union 2010.

2007 data was also used in two Eurostat's Press Releases:

- Living conditions in the EU27. One person in six feels that crime or vandalism is a problem in their neighbourhood, 41/2009 - 26 March 2009.
- Living conditions in the EU27. One third of the EU population could not afford an unexpected expenditure in 2007, 77/2009 - 28 May 2009.

5. COMPARABILITY

Comparability refers to a common set of concepts and definitions that shall be applied by the countries when designing the survey and collecting the data. It encompasses both basic definitions (reference population, private household, household membership...) and income concepts (employee income, self-employment income...).

Commission Regulation 1980/2003 establishes the framework for comparability, which has set out standard definitions as accurately as possible to cover most of the cases that might be encountered in practice. Some degree of flexibility is allowed regarding the definitions but countries have to report on deviations and their estimated impact in the national quality report.

5.1. Basic concepts and definitions

To ensure comparability of data similar definitions should be used by countries. This section summarizes the deviations from the standard definitions reported by countries. In the Intermediate EU Quality Report 2007 there is detailed information on this aspect, one table on the adherence/deviation to the standard definition on the reference population, the private household and the household membership and a second table on the reference period for income, for taxes on income and social insurance contributions and for taxes on wealth. As no new information has been reported by countries in the final quality report, this section presents a summary of the conclusions by item.

Reference population

Only two countries report additional information to the standard definition:

Romania	"The reference population is all citizens officially living in Romania. Persons living in collective households and in institutions are excluded from the target population, as well as households having members diplomatic missioners."
Sweden	"Reference population is the whole Swedish population except short term migration, people who stay in Sweden 3-12 months, is not covered."

Private household

Three countries report slight differences with the standard definition:

Italy	"The private household definition: in accordance with the Commission Regulation (EC) N° 1980/2003 (Annex I. paragraph 1.1), that allow to the Member States for using the
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	common household definition defined in their own national statistical system in EU-SILC Italy uses the following Italian household definition: cohabitants related through marriage, kinship, affinity, adoption, patronage and affection.”
Austria	“(….)From 2007 the definition will be applied more precisely to better comply with the Eurostat definition: If there is more than one household living in one dwelling and not sharing expenses, they will be collected as different households. If the persons living at the particular address clearly do not share their expenses (meaning for example a lodger is paying for his or her rent and does not share utility costs or food with the rest of the household), a separate additional household will be registered at the same address. Flat-sharing communities are in most of the cases considered as one household because in the majority of cases the members of such communities are sharing their living costs. If the expenses of the flat-sharing community are not shared, meaning that the payments for rent, operating costs and daily expenses are paid individually, the members would constitute individual households…”
United Kingdom	“A household in QR is defined as: ‘a single person or a group of people who have the address as their only or main residence and who either share one meal a day or share the living accommodation’ (General Household Survey 2005, 2006 & 2007). A group of people is not counted as a household solely on the basis of a shared kitchen or bathroom.”

Household membership

Some deviations from the standard definition are reported by five countries:

Spain	<p>“We have tried to implement in the field the definition of ‘household member’, given in the Commission Regulation. But, owing to the large number of possible special cases, and so as to reduce the number of related items on the questionnaire, there may be differences in some marginal cases.</p> <p>To identify those differences, we provide a table below in which the left column itemises groups of people deemed household members under the definition given in the Regulation. On the right of the table we indicate whether such persons are household members under the definition used for the Spanish questionnaire.</p> <p>Next we provide a reciprocal table in which the left column itemises groups of people deemed household members under the definition used for the Spanish questionnaire, while the right column indicates whether they are household members under the definition given in the Regulation.”</p>
Italy	“...the Italian EU-SILC does not include live-in domestic personnel au pairs. Concerning these persons, only some socio-demographic information are collected (date of birth, sex, marital status, duration of stay in the household). The number of these persons included in the sample was 51 (0.19% with respect to the total number of households and 0.08% with respect to interviewed individuals).”
Austria	“The definition of household membership follows from the above definition of the household.” (See definition in the table above).
Portugal	“Contrary to the EU-SILC concept, persons absent for long periods, but having household ties (persons working away from home) are not considered as household members if the absence is for more than 6 months (the income obtained from them is considered as a private transfer).”
United Kingdom	<p>“A person is in general regarded as living at an address if he or she (or the informant) considers the address to be his or her main residence. There are however, certain rules which take precedent over this criterion.</p> <p>Children aged 16 or over who live away from home for the purposes of either work or study and come home only for holidays are not included at the parental address under any circumstances.</p> <p>Children of any age away from the home in a temporary job and children under 16 at boarding school are always included in the parental household.</p>

	<p>Anyone who has been away from the address continuously for 6 months or longer is excluded.</p> <p>Anyone who has been living continuously at the address for 6 months or longer is included even if she has his or her main residence elsewhere.</p> <p>Addresses used only as second homes are never counted as a main residence.”</p>
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Income reference period

The income reference period for most of countries is the calendar year previous to the survey year, i.e. 2006; with two exceptions:

Ireland	<p>“The income reference period was in the 12 months prior the date of interview.”</p>
United Kingdom	<p>“EU-SILC UK, like all other official income surveys in UK, uses continuous interviewing with interviews spread evenly throughout the year. The survey measures current income. So for example, for income from earnings and benefits, respondents will provide figures which relate most commonly to the last week, two weeks, or month. With earnings in particular, respondents are asked for usual earnings. These figures, which represent current (and usual) incomes are then annualised (weekly estimates multiplied by 52, monthly by 12 etc). Income from self-employment can be reported for a variety of periods, but it is always up-rated (using the UK’s average earnings index) to the interview date. For income from investment and employee non-cash income respondents are most likely provide their most recent annual or half-yearly income that they received from this source. This income would be annualised, although there is no up-rating.</p> <p>This approach is adopted in the UK because it is much easier for respondents to provide estimates of current income, than income for a specific reference period, say the most recent financial year. In the UK only a relatively small proportion of the adult population fill in tax returns, and the rest of the population probably never actually calculate what their annual income is. For this reason, it would be very difficult to collect an estimate of annual income corresponding to a fixed reference year.</p> <p>So the estimates of income do not correspond strictly to an income reference year. However we can regard each household’s estimate of annualised current income, as corresponding to a 12 month period centred around the interview date. So for a household interviewed in early January 2007, we can regard their income as being measured for the period July 2006 to June 2007, and similarly for a household interviewed in December 2007, the income estimate can be regarded as referring to the period July 2007 to June 2008. Since interviews are spread evenly throughout the year, for any one survey year, the interview reference periods collectively, are centred around the calendar year. And therefore it is reasonable to regard aggregate statistics produced from the full annual datasets, as measuring annual income in the current survey year. So the EU-SILC UK 2007 survey, measures current annual income in 2007.</p> <p>In the UK, household income statistics, and especially aggregate statistics such as those that are produced from EU-SILC, are generally used and interpreted on the assumption that this distinction between annualised current income, and what might be called a ‘true’ annual income, is small.”</p>

Reference period for taxes on income and social insurance contributions

For almost all countries 2006 was the reference period for taxes on income and social insurance contributions with the exception of Ireland and the United Kingdom with reference period similar to the income's one (see table above).

Reference period for taxes on wealth

Most of the countries used as reference period 2006 with only one exception:

United Kingdom	“The reference period for taxes on wealth is based on data provided for the financial years April 2006–March 2007 and April 2007–March 2008. All interviewing for EU-SILC UK took place between January 2007 and 31 February 2008.”
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Five countries do not have taxes on wealth: Belgium, Ireland, Malta, The Netherlands and Austria.

Time lag

The lag in months between income reference period and current variables differs from country to country, from Ireland and the United Kingdom with no time lag to Sweden with up to 12 months lag.

Fieldwork duration

The duration in months of the data collection varies greatly from country to country: from one month in Slovakia to up to twelve months in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Most of the countries finished the fieldwork period by July, with nine exceptions: Belgium, Italy, Latvia, Malta, The Netherlands, Austria and Sweden plus the two countries with a continuous survey, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

5.2. Components of income

Regarding the components of income some flexibility has been allowed to the definitions, particularly for taking into account national constraints. Countries report on any differences between the national definitions and the standard EU-SILC definition. Two summary tables by country and income component can be found in the annex of the Intermediate EU Quality Report 2007, one on household income components and one on personal income components.

5.3. Tracing rules

Tracing rules are defined in Commission Regulation EC 1982/2003. Most of the countries follow the common rules, and some of them report in detail the procedure. The following table summarizes the information in the national quality reports.

		Comment from the country
Belgium	--	No ‘final quality report’ received.
Bulgaria	F	"Standard EU-SILC tracing rules are applied."
Czech Republic	F	"No difference to common methodology".
Denmark	F	"Tracing was conducted using the personal number in the population register. In principle there is no difference from national rules and the standard EU-rules."
Germany	F	"For the first survey year (2005) of the longitudinal component of EU-SILC no tracing rules were to be applied. For the second year of the longitudinal component, the tracing rules as laid down in the document EU-SILC 065 were applied."

		Comment from the country
Estonia	F	"There were no differences between the national tracing rules and the standard EU-SILC tracing rules".
Ireland	N	"Due to field staff recruitment/retention problems we did not have enough field staff to trace households that moved".
Greece	F	"The Commission Regulation (EC) no. 1982/2003 of 21 October 2003, regarding the tracing rules, has been adopted and applied."
Spain	F	"Standard EU-SILC tracing rules are applied".
France	F	"Les règles de suivi pour la France sont conformes au règlement européen."
Italy	F	"They were adopted the standard EUSILC tracing rules."
Cyprus	F	"There were no differences between the national tracing rules and the standard EU-SILC tracing rules"
Latvia	F	"To identify the residence of a person moving from one address to another address, the information from the Household list of the previous wave and the population register was used".
Lithuania	F	"The tracing rules were applied according to the document EU-SILC 065."
Luxembourg	F	"Panel à long terme démarré en 2003 avec ajout d'un sous-échantillon de taille plus modeste chaque année. Règles de suivi conformes à celles recommandées par Eurostat."
Hungary	F	"No difference to common methodology"
Malta	F	"The EU-SILC tracing rules have been implemented in the tracing procedure. In an attempt to facilitate this procedure the questionnaire incorporates a question that asks about the intention or expectation to move house in the 12 months following the interview."
The Netherlands	--	No 'final quality report' received.
Austria	F	"Tracing rules as laid down in the document EU-SILC 065 were applied."
Poland	F	"Standard EU-SILC tracing rules are applied."
Portugal	F	"Doc. 065/2004 rules were adopted."
Romania	--	No information
Slovenia	L	"Due to the fact that in Slovenia we use sample of persons and each household has only one selected person, we traced only the selected person. These persons are at least 16 years old. We trace to such person, if he/she moves in the territory of Slovenia. If the sample person moved permanently into institution or collective household, such household was excluded from survey. We excluded from survey also households where the sampled person died. In the case that sampled person moved interviewers (CAPI) had to fill in special form, where they wrote new address, if they found it from persons who live in the address or from neighbours. They sent to the office these forms with new addresses and in the office we prepared additional list of sampled persons which we sent to appropriate interviewer. In the case that move person who was interviewed by phone, interviewer wrote the new address into the computer program and after the CATI interviewing period was finished, we sent all lists to the appropriate interviewers. In the case that interviewer could not get a new address, in the Statistical office we tried to find new address from other sources. This way all selected persons and their households who moved are interviewed face to face under condition that we got new address."

		Comment from the country
Slovakia	F	"Procedure of tracing of households and persons: 1. If whole household moved out, interviewer had to find out its new address by all available sources. This information could be obtained from neighbours or relatives, municipal/communal office and others. Interviewer provide new address of household, name and surname of the head of the household in relevant form and also filled ID number of household and this form gave to coordinator of the Regional Office in period at least 3 days. Consequently coordinator decided on another procedure to continue in this circumstance. 2. Similarly interviewer proceeded in the case of one or more selected persons moved out. Basic source of information on place of moving of selected person/persons was information received from other household members. For each person moved out interviewer completed relevant form, where was listed new address of this person again, his/her name and surname, household ID and personal ID. 3. In the case if interviewer was entrusted to collect data for household or person moved out, needed information was received from coordinator of the relevant Regional Office."
Finland	F	"The tracing rules for the follow-up of sample persons, sample households and co-residents have been followed in the longitudinal survey according to the EU-SILC requirements framework. Because of the sampling design and the sampling unit definition used (the selected individuals), only the initial sample persons of the first wave are followed over the survey years. Households are constructed and household members are defined (mostly co-residents, see the household membership definition) around these sample persons. Household members include the ones who were currently living in the households containing the initial sample person or who were temporarily absent from that household at the end of the income reference period (31 December). Membership status is checked in the each wave"
Sweden	F	"The sampling unit is individual, and we include all household-members at the time when the sample is drawn the first year. During the following three year the sampled individuals are included in the panel wave, and there household-situation is examined. If there original household from the first year has been split, we only follow the sampled individual. The household-situation for not sampled household-members is not examined if they no longer belong to the household of the sampled individuals."
United Kingdom	L	"For UK EU-SILC 2006, persons aged 14 and above who could not be contacted in 2005 where not always re-contacted in 2006. Furthermore, information on former residents was not collected. A similar process was followed between 2006 and 2007."
Iceland	F	"In Iceland a respondent is selected from the national register. Whoever lives with the selected respondent is also included in the survey. If the composition of the households of the selected respondent changes between waves we do not trace other household members. We only trace the selected respondent and if he or she has new household-partners they will be included in the survey. The information used for tracing are received from the national register, information on phone numbers are received from the largest phone company in Iceland. Information from former household members is also used to help locate selected respondents if the selected respondent has moved. All data are collected through telephone."
Norway	F	"In the Norwegian EU-SILC the respondent (person/selected respondent) is selected from the population register. All household members of the selected respondent are included in the survey. If the household composition changes between waves, household members are not traced. We only trace the selected respondent. Tracing is done by using updated data from the population register, data from the previous data collection and by searching for phone numbers. The interviewer can also apply different ad-hoc methods to trace respondents."

Source: National Quality Reports 2007.

F (fully), L (largely), P (partly), N (not comparable), -- (No information).

We can conclude that the large majority of countries follow the standard rules.

6. COHERENCE

In each survey or administrative data variables similar to those in EU-SILC can be found and then the definitions and data can be compared taking as starting point EU-SILC variables.

There is a variety of sources to analyse the coherence of EU-SILC. The sources mostly used by the countries to compare EU-SILC data are: previous operations of EU-SILC (considered as an analysis of the comparability of the data), Household Budget Survey (HBS), Labour Force Survey (LFS), National Accounts (NA) and administrative sources.

The information presented on this section of the national quality report varies greatly among countries. Some countries only explain they did coherence studies but do not present the results in the national quality report. The table below presents a summary of which coherence studies were carried out with 2007 data by country.

Table 7: Comparison between EU-SILC and other datasets (2007)

	Comparison with previous EU-SILC	Comparison with Household Budget Survey	Comparison with Labour Force Survey	Comparison with National Accounts	Comparison with administrative sources	Comparison with other sources
Belgium	N	N	N	N	N	N
Bulgaria	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Czech Republic	N	N	N	Y	Y	N
Denmark	N	N	N	N	N	N
Germany	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Estonia	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Ireland	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Greece	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Spain	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
France	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Italy	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N
Cyprus	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Latvia	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Lithuania	N	Y	N	N	Y	N
Luxembourg	N	N	N	N	N	N
Hungary	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Malta	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N
The Netherlands	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
Austria	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N
Poland	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
Portugal	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
Romania	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Slovenia	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Slovakia	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Finland	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

	Comparison with previous EU-SILC	Comparison with Household Budget Survey	Comparison with Labour Force Survey	Comparison with National Accounts	Comparison with administrative sources	Comparison with other sources
Sweden	N	N	N	N	N	N
United Kingdom	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Iceland	N	N	N	N	N	N
Norway	N	N	N	N	N	N

Source: National Quality Reports 2007.

The main conclusions from this table are the following:

- The majority of countries performed coherence studies with 2007 data. The only exceptions are: Belgium, because they had problems to run the tests; Luxembourg, because of the difficulties to gather income information on ‘cross-border’ workers and international officials; and some register countries, because EU-SILC data already come from registers. Nevertheless, all these countries should envisage the possibility of comparing data with, at least, previous editions of EU-SILC.
- Twelve countries compared data with HBS, eleven with LFS, nine with National Accounts and eleven with administrative sources.
- Eleven countries compared 2007 data with previous years.
- Six countries carried out coherence studies with other national sources.

7. ANNEXES

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Annex 1: Mode of data collection

Table 8: Mode of data collection (longitudinal)

2004	1-PAPI		2-CAPI		3-CATI		4-Self-administered	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BE	.	.	2253	100	.	.	.	.
DK	.	.	.	.	1389	90.61	144	9.39
EE	4342	98.61	.	.	8	0.18	53	1.2
IE	.	.	1523	100	.	.	.	.
EL	2200	63.71	1208	34.98	41	1.19	4	0.12
ES	5050	95.28	.	.	118	2.23	132	2.49
FR	.	.	9616	100	.	.	.	.
IT	10671	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
LU	6027	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
AT	.	.	3967	100	.	.	.	.
PT	266	10.22	2336	89.78	.	.	.	.
FI	.	.	66	3.38	1888	96.62	.	.
SE	.	.	.	.	3416	100	.	.
IS	.	.	.	.	1464	100	.	.
NO	.	.	22	0.43	5061	99.57	.	.

2005	1-PAPI		2-CAPI		3-CATI		4-Self-administered	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BE	.	.	5263	100	.	.	.	.
CZ	7759	99.17	.	.	.	.	65	0.83
DK	.	.	.	.	2604	95.14	133	4.86
DE	.	.	.	.	.	.	12452	100
EE	478	9.2	4702	90.48	12	0.23	5	0.1
IE	.	.	3705	100	.	.	.	.
EL	4376	72.16	1610	26.55	78	1.29	.	.
ES	.	.	8946	96.05	366	3.93	2	0.02
FR	.	.	10838	100	.	.	.	.
IT	20547	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
CY	16	0.42	3823	99.58	.	.	.	.
LV	5037	98.94	.	.	.	.	54	1.06
LT	4150	97.53	.	.	40	0.94	65	1.53
LU	5806	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
HU	7466	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
MT	354	12.07	2580	87.93	.	.	.	.
NL	.	.	.	.	8050	100	.	.
AT	.	.	4974	93.67	336	6.33	.	.
PL	15120	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
PT	316	6.73	4382	93.27	.	.	.	.
SI	4161	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
SK	6054	99.59	.	.	.	.	25	0.41
FI	.	.	132	3.57	3563	96.43	.	.
SE	5	0.08	.	.	6509	99.92	.	.
UK	.	.	10582	100	.	.	.	.
IS	.	.	.	.	2935	100	.	.
NO	.	.	34	0.66	5085	99.34	.	.

2006	1-PAPI		2-CAPI		3-CATI		4-Self-administered	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BE	.	.	7779	100	.	.	.	.
CZ	13554	99.46	.	.	.	.	73	0.54
DK	.	.	.	.	3608	95.63	165	4.37
DE	.	.	.	.	.	.	16268	100
EE	149	1.76	8297	98.06	11	0.13	4	0.05
IE	.	.	7024	100	.	.	.	.
EL	6794	71.92	2420	25.62	233	2.47	.	.
ES	.	.	11741	93.25	850	6.75	.	.
FR	.	.	12792	100	.	.	.	.
IT	29406	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
CY	1	0.02	5722	99.98	.	.	.	.
LV	848	12.3	5730	83.1	310	4.5	7	0.1
LT	6369	95.83	.	.	177	2.66	100	1.5
LU	5765	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
HU	11398	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
MT	.	.	4367	100	.	.	.	.
NL	.	.	.	.	8682	100	.	.
AT	.	.	8344	99.5	42	0.5	.	.
PL	21619	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
PT	547	8.34	6010	91.66	.	.	.	.
SI	.	.	2971	55.27	2404	44.73	.	.
SK	8814	99.46	.	.	.	.	48	0.54
FI	.	.	126	2.4	5132	97.6	.	.
SE	5	0.06	.	.	8868	99.94	.	.
UK	.	.	13246	100	.	.	.	.
IS	.	.	.	.	4283	100	.	.
NO	.	.	22	0.46	4713	99.54	.	.

2007	1-PAPI		2-CAPI		3-CATI		4-Self-administered	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BE	.	.	6702	100	.	.	.	.
CZ	12640	99.67	.	.	.	.	42	0.33
DK	.	.	.	.	3057	94.94	163	5.06
DE	.	.	.	.	.	.	14629	100
EE	124	1.66	7351	98.14	14	0.19	1	0.01
IE	.	.	4102	100	.	.	.	.
EL	6599	80.3	1259	15.32	220	2.68	140	1.7
ES	.	.	10630	92.41	873	7.59	.	.
FR	.	.	12003	100	.	.	.	.
IT	25977	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
CY	1	0.02	5141	99.98	.	.	.	.
LV	541	9.49	4703	82.48	455	7.98	3	0.05
LT	5500	94.73	.	.	259	4.46	47	0.81
LU	5184	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
HU	9716	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
MT	.	.	3619	100	.	.	.	.
NL	.	.	.	.	12277	100	.	.
AT	.	.	6765	91.33	642	8.67	.	.

PL	19882	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
PT	511	8.85	5262	91.15	.	.	.	.
SI	.	.	537	13.14	3550	86.86	.	.
SK	7853	99.32	.	.	.	.	54	0.68
FI	.	.	42	0.82	5088	99.18	.	.
SE	.	.	.	.	7870	100	.	.
UK	.	.	10157	100	.	.	.	.
IS	.	.	.	.	3957	100	.	.
NO	.	.	24	0.5	4789	99.5	.	.

Source: Micro-database (April 2010).

PAPI: Paper Assisted Personal Interview; CAPI: Computer Assisted Personal Interview; CATI: Computer Assisted Telephone Interview.

Table 9: Proxy interviews (longitudinal)

2004	N	%	2005	N	%
BE	318	12.37	BE	865	14.12
DK	1482	49.15	CZ	804	9.32
EE	46	1.03	DK	2617	48.88
IE	635	29.43	DE	1558	11.12
EL	73	2.07	EE	262	4.8
ES	2558	32.55	IE	1604	30.21
FR	3178	24.84	EL	341	5.32
IT	2092	16.39	ES	6298	40.34
LU	1575	20.72	FR	3994	26.93
AT	673	14.5	IT	3864	15.83
PT	344	11.68	CY	602	13.56
FI	2064	51.37	LV	317	5.86
SE	190	5.27	LT	655	13.34
IS	.	.	LU	1716	22.81
NO	2609	33.92	HU	858	10.31
			MT	1212	29.23
			NL	5449	40.37
			AT	1770	25
			PL	3585	19.17
			PT	758	13.89
			SI	1311	23.96
			SK	345	5.37
			FI	3833	50.92
			SE	345	5.03
			UK	1247	10.54
			IS	.	.
			NO	1955	27.64

2006	N	%
BE	1227	13.62
CZ	1229	8.27
DK	3602	48.84
DE	4069	20.01
EE	507	5.65
IE	7024	8.57
EL	384	3.91
ES	8962	41.58
FR	4682	26.79
IT	5444	15.62
CY	851	12.94
LV	499	6.75
LT	1317	16.54
LU	1962	25.39
HU	1729	13.17
MT	2033	31.77
NL	6627	43.29
AT	2039	19.56
PL	4811	18.2
PT	1035	13.63
SI	1865	25.76
SK	515	5.49
FI	5344	50.41
SE	284	3.1
UK	1476	10.03
IS	.	.
NO	2058	30.3

2007	N	%
BE	1191	15.09
CZ	1227	8.82
DK	3058	48.71
DE	4180	22.22
EE	981	11.58
IE	4102	20.94
EL	553	6.3
ES	8328	41.99
FR	4747	28.34
IT	5257	16.83
CY	1117	17.85
LV	352	5.81
LT	1560	21.18
LU	1578	23.34
HU	2208	18.52
MT	1848	33.8
NL	367	2.9
AT	1907	20.47
PL	4125	17.18
PT	1186	17.04
SI	1596	28.08
SK	524	6.22
FI	4665	47.63
SE	198	2.45
UK	937	8.45
IS	.	.
NO	1948	28.81

Source: Micro-database (April 2010).

Annex 2: Timeliness and punctuality

Table 10: Follow-up cross-sectional data (2007)

	Regulation deadline	Contractual deadline	First transmission	Number of transmissions	Last transmission
Belgium	01/10/2008	01/10/2008	17/12/2008	4	29/01/2009
Czech Republic	01/10/2008	30/09/2008	30/09/2008	3	08/12/2008
Denmark	30/11/2008	01/10/2008	17/11/2008	2	28/11/2008
Germany	01/10/2008	31/10/2008	31/10/2008	4	09/12/2008
Estonia	01/10/2008	01/10/2008	25/06/2008	2	30/09/2008
Ireland	30/11/2008	30/10/2008	28/10/2008	1	28/10/2008
Greece	01/10/2008	30/09/2008	30/10/2008	3	13/11/2008
Spain	01/10/2008	30/08/2008	23/09/2008	2	27/10/2008
France	01/10/2008	30/10/2008	29/09/2008	4	28/11/2008
Italy	01/10/2008	30/11/2008	28/11/2009	3	24/12/2009
Cyprus	01/10/2008	30/10/2008	14/11/2008	2	21/11/2008
Latvia	01/10/2008	01/10/2008	30/09/2008	2	23/10/2008
Lithuania	01/10/2008	31/07/2008	24/07/2008	4	04/02/2009
Luxembourg	01/10/2008	31/10/2008	10/09/2008	2	30/09/2008
Hungary	01/10/2008	16/06/2008	16/06/2008	3	18/10/2008

	Regulation deadline	Contractual deadline	First transmission	Number of transmissions	Last transmission
Malta	01/10/2008	31/10/2008	14/10/2008	3	24/02/2010
The Netherlands	30/11/2008	01/10/2008	02/10/2008	3	27/11/2008
Austria	01/10/2008	31/07/2008	31/07/2008	3	03/10/2008
Poland	01/10/2008	31/07/2008	31/07/2008	5	09/01/2009
Portugal	01/10/2008	30/09/2008	10/11/2008	2	02/12/2008
Slovenia	30/11/2008	30/11/2008	29/10/2008	1	29/10/2008
Slovakia	01/10/2008	31/03/2008	18/03/2008	2	19/08/2008
Finland	30/11/2008	31/05/2008	13/06/2008	3	02/10/2008
Sweden	30/11/2008	30/11/2008	23/10/2008	2	08/03/2010
United Kingdom	30/11/2008	17/10/2008	08/12/2008	4	21/01/2009
Iceland	30/11/2008	30/11/2008	03/09/2008	4	16/10/2008
Norway	30/11/2008	30/11/2008	02/10/2008	3	13/11/2008

Source: eDamis and Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003. March 2010.

Note: The dates in bold in the 'First transmission column' indicate a delay of transmitted data after the contractual date.

Table 11: Follow-up longitudinal data (2007)

	Regulation deadline	Contractual deadline	First transmission	Number of transmissions	Last transmission
Belgium	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	09/04/2009	3	26/05/2009
Czech Republic	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	06/04/2009	3	20/05/2009
Denmark	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	22/04/2009	5	30/09/2009
Germany	31/03/2009	01/02/2009	31/03/2009	11	05/10/2009
Estonia	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	01/04/2009	2	01/04/2009
Ireland	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	27/04/2009	3	29/09/2009
Greece	31/03/2009	01/03/2009	02/04/2009	3	15/04/2009
Spain	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	13/01/2009	3	06/03/2009
France	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	09/04/2009	6	27/07/2009
Italy	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	2	30/04/2009
Cyprus	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	4	06/05/2009
Latvia	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	6	13/05/2009
Lithuania	31/03/2009	28/02/2009	27/02/2009	2	12/05/2009
Luxembourg	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	16/03/2009	3	29/05/2009
Hungary	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	7	06/05/2009
Malta	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	23/03/2009	4	19/05/2009
The Netherlands	31/03/2009	01/10/2008	19/03/2009	3	12/05/2009
Austria	31/03/2009	28/02/2009	27/02/2009	3	05/05/2009
Poland	31/03/2009	31/10/2009	31/10/2008	3	30/04/2009
Portugal	31/03/2009	15/03/2009	13/03/2009	3	20/04/2009
Slovenia	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	16/03/2009	3	04/06/2009
Slovakia	31/03/2009	30/07/2008	30/07/2008	4	04/05/2009
Finland	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	20/03/2009	2	07/05/2009
Sweden	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	25/03/2009	1	25/03/2009

	Regulation deadline	Contractual deadline	First transmission	Number of transmissions	Last transmission
United Kingdom	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	07/05/2009	4	03/06/2009
Iceland	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	30/04/2009	1	30/04/2009
Norway	31/03/2009	31/03/2009	30/03/2009	2	20/04/2009

Source: eDamis and Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003, March 2010.

Note: The dates in bold in the 'First transmission' column indicate a delay of transmitted data after the contractual date.

Table 12: Follow-up intermediate national quality reports (2007)

	Regulation deadline	Contractual deadline	First version	Last version
Belgium	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	10/02/2009	19/08/09
Bulgaria	31/12/2008		27/07/2009	
Czech Republic	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	05/01/2009	16/02/2009
Denmark	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	15/01/2009	26/10/2009
Germany	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	30/12/2008	20/01/2009
Estonia	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	30/12/2008	
Ireland	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	02/03/2009	24/04/2009
Greece	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	23/12/2008	
Spain	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	15/12/2008	
France	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	19/12/2008	
Italy	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	21/01/2009	02/02/2009
Cyprus	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	02/01/2009	
Latvia	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	30/12/2008	
Lithuania	31/12/2008	15/12/2008	15/12/2008	03/02/2009
Luxembourg	31/12/2008	30/11/2008	19/01/2009	03/02/2009
Hungary	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	08/12/2008	
Malta	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	22/12/2008	
The Netherlands	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	16/01/2009	
Austria	31/12/2008	30/11/2008	31/10/2008	11/12/2008
Poland	31/12/2008	30/11/2008	01/12/2008	01/04/2009
Portugal	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	25/02/2009
Romania	31/12/2008		19/08/2009	
Slovenia	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	30/12/2008	09/02/2009
Slovakia	31/12/2008	30/04/2008	20/10/2008	12/05/2009
Finland	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	02/01/2009	09/02/2009
Sweden	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	19/12/2008	18/05/2009
United Kingdom	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	16/01/2009	
Iceland	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	12/12/2008	18/02/2009
Norway	31/12/2008	31/12/2008	18/12/2008	19/03/2009

Source: eDamis and e-mails (some countries sent the national quality reports by e-mail instead of via eDamis). April 2010.

Note: The dates in bold in the 'First transmission' column indicate a delay of transmitted data after the contractual date.

Table 13: Follow-up final national quality reports (2007)

	Regulation deadline	Contractual deadline	First version	Last version
Belgium	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	29/04/2010	
Bulgaria	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	05/01/2010	03/02/2010
Czech Republic	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	14/01/2010	
Denmark	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	26/11/2009	14/01/2010
Germany	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	18/02/2010
Estonia	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	22/12/2009	
Ireland	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	21/12/2009	
Greece	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	03/02/2010	
Spain	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	19/11/2009	
France	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	15/02/2010	
Italy	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	15/01/2010	
Cyprus	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	30/12/2009	
Latvia	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	
Lithuania	31/12/2009	15/12/2009	16/12/2009	13/01/2010
Luxembourg	31/12/2009	30/11/2009	30/11/2009	
Hungary	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	
Malta	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	14/12/2009	
The Netherlands	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	Not received	
Austria	31/12/2009	31/10/2009	02/11/2009	27/11/2009
Poland	31/12/2009	30/11/2009	30/11/2009	
Portugal	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	23/12/2009	
Romania	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	03/02/2010	
Slovenia	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	30/12/2009	
Slovakia	31/12/2009	31/07/2009	30/07/2008	26/01/2010
Finland	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	
Sweden	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	23/12/2009	
United Kingdom	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	08/03/2010	
Iceland	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	05/10/2009	21/12/2009
Norway	31/12/2009	31/12/2009	08/01/2010	

Source: eDamis and e-mails (some countries sent the national quality reports by e-mail instead of via eDamis). April 2010.

Note: The dates in bold in the 'First transmission' column indicate a delay of transmitted data after the contractual date.

Annex 3: Collection of income variables

Table 14: Source or procedure used for the collection of income variables (2007)

	Source income variables	
Belgium	Interview	
Bulgaria	Interview	
Czech Republic	Interview	
Denmark	Register	
Germany	Self-administered questionnaire	All income variables were collected by household and personal self administered questionnaires. In case of substantial incompleteness or implausibility they were phoned by the fieldwork team in order to collect more information by phone
Estonia	Interview	
Ireland	Interview and register	“If we did not collect employee income details directly from respondents and if we relied exclusively on register data.”
Greece	Interview	
Spain	Interview	
France	Interview	
Italy	Interview	Administrative data have been linked to sample data and used for checking pensions and self-employment incomes.
Cyprus	Interview	
Latvia	Interview	
Lithuania	Interview and register	Administrative data were used for making the survey income data more accurate or for supplementing them.
Luxembourg	Interview	
Hungary	Interview	
Malta	Interview	

	Source income variables	
The Netherlands	Register	“The variables concerning income, wealth and taxes were almost entirely collected from registers. The most important source is the Tax Administration. Data on rent subsidies are obtained from the Ministry of Housing. Student grants were obtained from the student loan company. Some components were imputed on the basis of information given in the questionnaire. For example, child benefits were calculated on the basis of the information about the number and age of children in the household.”
Austria	Interview	
Poland	Interview	
Portugal	Interview	
Romania	Interview	
Slovenia	Interview and register	Mainly register.
Slovakia	Interview	
Finland	Register	
Sweden	Register	
United Kingdom	Interview	
Iceland	Interview and register	Tax register has been used for collecting all income variables, except for HY080 and HY130 (Regular inter-household cash transfer received and paid) which have been collected through interview.
Norway	Register	

Source: National Quality Reports 2007.

Table 15: The form in which income variables at component level have been obtained and the method used for obtaining income target variables in gross (2007)

	Gross or net	Comments
Belgium	Gross and net	For a limited number of monetary variables a limited number of respondents had given only a value for the gross variant of the variable (the opposite (only net is given) occurred much more). For these cases a net value was imputed on basis of the gross using the Belgian rules of taxation. A small number of net-pensions and unemployment benefits were imputed in this way.

	Gross or net	Comments
Bulgaria	Gross or net	"The interviewers and the respondents have the option of reporting income gross or net at component level. The form in which the net amounts are recorded in database are net of tax on income at source and of social contributions".
Czech Republic	Gross and net	
Denmark	Gross	
Germany	Gross	For all income variables respondents were asked for gross values. Only sickness benefits were supposed to be reported as an amount net of taxes and social contributions.
Estonia	Gross or net	Where only net values were collected or only net or gross value was recorded, the corresponding net and gross values were calculated on the basis of those recorded values. Conversion algorithms were created on the basis of the national tax system. Information as to which taxes were paid on income components were also collected and taken into account in the conversions.
Ireland	Gross and net	
Greece	Mainly net	Mainly net of taxes on income at source and social contributions. The interviewers and the respondents have the option of reporting income gross or net (of tax on income at source and, if applicable, of social contributions) at component level. The form in which the net amounts are recorded in database are net of tax on income at source and of social contributions.
Spain	Net	Respondents had the option of reporting income gross or net (of tax on income at source and, if applicable, of social contributions) at component level. The interviewee normally states income net at source although in some cases gives too gross. The form in which the amount are recorded in database are net of tax on income at source and, if applicable, of social contributions. – Net amounts: Target income variables were reported net of tax on income at source and, where applicable, net of social contributions. – Gross amounts: Target gross income variables have also been obtained, reported directly by the respondent or using a net-to-gross conversion model.
France	Net of social contributions but gross of taxes	The income variables are collected net of social insurance contributions, which means net plus taxes. Information on taxes is also collected, and the social contributions are imputed. This means that the aggregate gross and net variables, HY010, HY020, HY022, and HY023 can be estimated. At the component level, the available information is, strictly, neither net nor gross. However, in the report and survey data, it is presented as net amounts. Actually this is net of social insurance contributions, but gross of taxes.
Italy	Net	All income variables at component level are both net and gross of taxes and social security contribution at source.

	Gross or net	Comments
Cyprus	Gross	In the very few cases where gross income was impossible to collect, net income was recorded. It was converted to gross by applying the existing tax system and social insurance contributions rules.
Latvia	Gross and net	
Lithuania	Mainly gross	Income components were collected gross, except PY010, PY050, PY090 and HY050. Conversion algorithms were created on the bases of country tax system. All income variables that are subjected to taxation and/or social insurance contribution were recorded gross and net into the microdata files (except for variable PY120 which included into variable PY010). Other income variables were recorded gross.
Luxembourg	Gross and net	
Hungary	Gross	Gross income data were collected for the income items but in case of certain benefits according to tax law which were not considered to be belonging to the taxable income net value were asked, like old-age pension or family allowance.
Malta	Mainly gross	“...it was stressed during briefing sessions that collection of gross rather than net income was preferred. However, in some cases only the net income was available from the household. In order to convert these values, a table was obtained from the Department of Inland Revenue showing gross income values corresponding to net income values. In this way the relevant gross value for income could be obtained.”
The Netherlands	Gross	“All income data derived from registers are recorded gross at component level. All income data are collected at the individual level (i.e. the person registered as the receiver of the income). This also concerns typically "household" related incomes such as housing benefits and social assistance.”
Austria	Gross and net	When either the gross value or the net value is given and the corresponding missing value is calculated by applying general rules. If an income variable was missing but either the gross or the net amount was declared, the corresponding missing value was computed according to a model based on Austrian tax data.
Poland	Net	The respondents were asked to give the net incomes and contributions (income tax prepayments and compulsory social insurance). Only in the case of income from rental of a property (HY040) the respondents were asked to give the gross income and the amount of tax paid. The gross income was obtained by summing up net value, income tax prepayments and compulsory social insurance contributions. If the information on tax and insurance contributions was missing, the amounts were imputed on the basis of the results obtained. Only in the case of income from rental of property, the tax paid was subtracted from the gross income.

	Gross or net	Comments
Portugal	Gross or net	All the income variables are presented net of taxes and social security contributions (except income from company car). However, some of the respondents reported gross incomes. If so, procedures were developed to convert gross incomes to net. For the households reporting only gross incomes, a micro-simulation model of the Portuguese tax system similar to the Euromod model was used. In case of both gross and net incomes reported, ad-hoc procedures were applied.
Romania	Net	"The majority of income components were recorded net and the gross variables were obtained by adding at the net values, the value of income tax retained at source and social contributions paid (in the case of wages, we add the value of other sums retained at source, too)."
Slovenia	Gross and net	All data are recorded into the data file gross and net. Some of variables have the same values for the gross and for the net, because from some kind of income the taxes were not paid.
Slovakia	Gross	
Finland	Gross	
Sweden	Gross	Gross but without employers' social contributions.
United Kingdom	Gross and net	For most income components which are subject to taxation and/or social security contributions, respondents are asked to provide net and gross amounts. The only exception to this is income from interest, dividends, and capital investments, which is collected either gross or net, and for which tax paid is then estimated.
Iceland	Gross	The income register data only report gross income at component level. Total assessed taxes and contributions to social security are collected separately from tax registers.
Norway	Gross	"All income data derived from registers are recorded gross at component level. All income data are collected at the individual level (i.e. the person registered as the receiver of the income item). This also concerns typically household related income such as housing benefits and social assistance. Register data also includes the income of children aged 13-16 years at the individual level. The income of children aged 12 and younger are, however, included in their parent's income (e.g. interest received)".

Source: National Quality Reports 2007.